

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 EB-07
COME-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /077 W
----- 071518 /44

R 201708Z DEC 76
FM AMCONSUL TORONTO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4696
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMCONSUL WINNIPEG

UNCLAS TORONTO 2336

E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS: PGOV, SOPN, CA
SUBJECT: COLUMNIST FORECASTS SPRING PROVINCIAL ELECTION

REF: TORONTO 2320

1. TORONTO STAR COLUMNIST JONATHAN MANTHORPE, COVERING THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT, WROTE IN HIS COLUMN "BREAKDOWN OF TRUST MAY SPARK ELECTION" ON DECEMBER 18 THAT THE BREAKDOWN OF THE TRUST "AMONG THE PARTY LEADERS THAT HAS ALLOWED THE MINORITY GOVERNMENT TO FUNCTION FOR 15 MONTHS" MAY INDUCE PC PREMIER DAVIS TO PUSH FOR A SPRING ELECTION. MANTHORPE NOTED THAT DAVIS' RELATIONS WITH OFFICIAL OPPOSITION NDP LEADER STEPHEN LEWIS MAY BE ERODED BY THE RELEASE OF CONFIDENTIAL COMMITTEE LISTS BY NDP MEMBERS AND DAVIS' INSISTENCE THAT LEWIS DISCIPLINE THE MPPS CONCERNED. DAVIS' RELATIONSHIP WITH LIBERAL LEADER SMITH ALLEGEDLY HAS DETERIORATED BECAUSE OF SMITH'S ACCUSATIONS OF POLITICAL INFLUENCE IN THE GREYHOUND BUS FRANCHISE.

2. MANTHORPE WROTE THAT A RECENT PC POLL BY MARKET OPINION RESEARCH, DETROIT, WHICH HAS NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC, SUPPOSEDLY SHOWS PREMIER DAVIS' POPULARITY QUITE HIGH AND AGEAD OF TORY
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PARTY POPULARITY. MANTHORPE CONCLUDED THAT THE SURVEY AND THE PC VIEW THAT FEDERAL POLITICAL TURMOIL IS TO THEIR ADVANTAGE PROVINCIALY, ALSO SUGGEST ARDWBNG ELECTION, AS THE IDEA THAT PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU "MIGHT CALL AN ELECTION NEXT SUMMER IS BECOMING A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY AND THE TORIES HERE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THEIR ELECTION FIRST BEFORE THE NATIONAL ISSUES

ARE RESOLVED."

DIGGINS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, PERSONAL OPINION, JOURNALISTS, ELECTION FORECASTS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TORONT02336
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760467-0145
From: TORONTO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761226/aaaaawtb.tel
Line Count: 63
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 TORONTO 2320
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: schwenja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 MAY 2004 by hattaycs>; APPROVED <31 AUG 2004 by schwenja>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COLUMNIST FORECASTS SPRING PROVINCIAL ELECTION
TAGS: PGOV, SOPN, CA, (MANTHORPE, JONATHAN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006